



**Tennessee Department of Transportation  
Communications Office**

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**TDOT Announces Safe Routes to School Grant Program**

*More than \$10 million available for projects promoting walking and biking to school*

Nashville, TN — The Tennessee Department of Transportation today announced a new statewide grant program focused on creating more opportunities for Tennessee children to walk and bike safely to school. The Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program will provide grants to state, local and regional agencies for projects designed to encourage walking and biking among elementary and middle school children.

"The Safe Routes to School program is an opportunity for our schools, communities, and local and state leaders to work together to promote a healthier lifestyle for our children and create a safer, cleaner environment for everyone," said Governor Phil Bredesen. "The start of this new program comes at a good time. With the recent launch of our GetFitTN initiative, we're taking a good look at how we can promote healthier, more active living in Tennessee. Picking a safe route to walk or bike to school is the perfect opportunity for families to begin a new fitness routine together."

The SRTS program will be funded by \$10.7 million in federal funds through 2009. The funds were provided specifically for this purpose through SAFETEA-LU (Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users), the federal surface transportation program. Grants will be for 100% federal funds and will not require a local match.

"The Safe Routes to School program is an innovative program that will integrate health, fitness, traffic relief, environmental concerns, and safety all under one program," said Department of Transportation Commissioner Gerald Nicely. "These grants will be awarded on a yearly basis and administered through TDOT. Funds will be available for two different types of projects, infrastructure and non-infrastructure, that directly support increased safety and conveniences for primary and middle school children to walk and bike to school."

SRTS grant funds will be awarded to state, local and regional agencies. Examples of eligible infrastructure projects include the addition of or improvements to existing sidewalks, bikeways, trails and crosswalks, and for speed reduction techniques around school zones. Non-infrastructure projects include training for crossing guards, safety education, such as student sessions on bicycle and pedestrian safety, events and activities to encourage walking and biking to school, and law enforcement in school zones.

Later this month, TDOT will announce SRTS training sessions in Knoxville, Chattanooga, Nashville, Memphis and Jackson for those interested in planning SRTS projects and activities and applying for a grant. The training sessions will be free and open to the public.

To learn more about the Safe Routes to School Program at the Tennessee Department of Transportation, please visit <http://www.tdot.state.tn.us/bikeped/saferoutes.htm> or contact Diana Benedict, Program Coordinator, at (615) 253-2421 or [diana.benedict@state.tn.us](mailto:diana.benedict@state.tn.us).

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